

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE GOES INTO EFFECT ON JAN. 1
Raises Minimum Wage from \$5.15 to \$6.15 an Hour

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today announced that the minimum hourly wage for North Carolina workers will increase by \$1 starting January 1, 2007. The increase, in legislation sponsored by Rep. Alma Adams (D-Guilford), Rep. Jim Harrell III (D-Alleghany, Surry) and Rep. Earl Jones (D-Guilford), was approved by the General Assembly last July.

"In North Carolina, we are leading the way in building a better workforce by providing the knowledge, talent and skill our citizens need to succeed in the global marketplace," Easley said. "After nine years without an increase in the federal minimum wage, North Carolina was done waiting on Washington. We took the matter in our own hands to help provide some economic security to our hard working families. The increase will help many North Carolinians cope with the rising costs of transportation, housing, healthcare and other basic needs so they can build better lives."

The state's minimum wage will increase from \$5.15 to \$6.15 per hour. The bill also ties North Carolina's minimum wage to the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. If the federal minimum wage is raised, employees in North Carolina will receive whichever wage is higher. The federal minimum wage is currently \$5.15 an hour and has not been raised in nine years.

"This is a small but significant step in the right direction toward a living wage," said Rep. Alma Adams, chief sponsor of the legislation. "We are ringing in the new year by letting our workers know that North Carolina values hard work and is concerned about all working families and we are making sure the 'least of those' among us will get a lift up."

"This is an important step forward in protecting our working poor," said Rep. Jim Harrell.

According to data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau, the increase in the state's minimum wage will benefit 139,000 workers in North Carolina.

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